## International Students Seeking Engineering and Technical Courses

According to Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled Nordin, Private Higher Learning Institutions (IPTS) in the country are not offering courses sought by international students. He urged private universities and university colleges to set up their own polytechnics offering courses, especially engineering and technical programmes, that can cater for the need of international students. He added that the Government would look into providing incentives for this purpose.

Datuk Seri Mohamed Khaled said the ministry was confident that it would achieve its target to have an intake of 75,000 international students this year compared with 70,000 in 2009. According to the ministry's data, five out of 10 students enquired about highly-specialised technical and engineering courses at the ministry's overseas expos. Currently, most IPTS are offering courses that are not popular among international students such as Business Administration, Information and Communications Technology as well as Social Science courses. UNESCO's Global Education Digest 2008 estimated that approximately 2% of the world's 2.5 million international students were studying in Malaysia.

*(Sourced from BERNAMA and The Star)*

## Capitalising on Our Competitive Edge in Service Sectors

Malaysian businesses should capitalise on their competitive edge in the service sectors to tap preferential trade facilities under the China-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), said International Trade and Industry Deputy Minister Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir. According to him, there was massive construction going on in many parts of China where Malaysian companies could provide architecture or design services to China. He pointed out that China is a huge market which also offered business opportunities in several other sectors. Datuk Mukhriz said, if Malaysian businesses fully understood the advantages of CAFTA, they can make full use of it to their advantage. Under the CAFTA agreement, ASEAN and China will liberalise the architecture, engineering, telecommunications, financial services, education, health and tourism, computer and related services, management consulting services, construction, environmental services, recreational service and transport services. At the same time, there is also a need to create awareness among small-and-medium (SME) entrepreneurs and industries on the US$10 billion allocation under the China-ASEAN Investment Cooperaton Fund and US$15 billion in loan facilities by the Chinese government to finance mega investment projects within the region.

*(Sourced from BERNAMA)*

## KNM Group Subsidiary Secures Order Worth RM143 Million

KNM Group Bhd's subsidiary KNM Process Systems Sdn Bhd and its affiliated company KNM Projects (Thailand) Co Ltd have secured a new order from Impress Ethanol Co Ltd for its bioethanol project in Thailand. The project, which is worth 1.3 billion baht (RM143 million), involves the engineering, procurement, construction and commissioning of a 200,000 litres per day cassava-based bioethanol plant in Chachaengsao. It is expected to be completed within 18 months. KNM Group announced that the order is expected to contribute positively to the group's earnings for the financial years ending December 31, 2010, and 2011. In a separate announcement, KNM Group said the group and subsidiaries have entered into relevant shares sale agreements to implement internal restructuring. The proposed internal restructuring, expected to be completed by mid-2010, is undertaken to streamline and realign the businesses and business units for the Caspian Region into the respective and distinct geographic locations for future projects.

*(Sourced from BERNAMA)*

## Iraq Welcomes Malaysian Investors to Participate in Rebuilding Efforts

Iraq is extending an opportunity to Malaysian companies to partake in the development of the country after the war. Muaiad Saleh, who is advisor to the Al-Muthanna Investment Commission, an investment promotion agency in southern Iraq, said business opportunities were plentiful in Iraq. Although there were already a number of multinational companies from the United States, Europe and Australia present in Iraq, Muaiad said Iraq had warm ties with Malaysia and both countries share many similarities in terms of culture. He believes Malaysian companies are likely to be more cost competitive, thus inviting them to invest and bid for projects in various sectors such as tourism, agriculture, health, trading and education.

Bilateral trade between the two nations had increased by an impressive 203% to RM693.5mil in 2008 from RM228.5mil in 2007, and the figure for last year (yet to be released) is expected to be even higher. Muaiad said Malaysian companies traditionally conducted businesses with many Arab states but significantly less with Iraq, in part, due to the lack of information about the country and its inherent wealth. He added that Iraq has the largest reserve of untapped oil in the world and is seeking for more investment by oil and gas companies for exploration work. In recent times, only one prominent Malaysian company, Petroliam Nasional Bhd (Petronas), has made a major foray into Iraq.

*(Sourced from The Star)*